

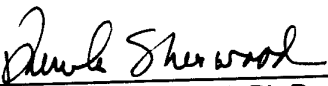
Atty Dkt. No.: STAN209

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees associated with this communication, including any necessary fees for extensions of time, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0815, order number STAN-209.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Date: May 24, 2002

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1. (twice amended) A method of activating an oocyte *in vitro*, the method comprising:  
contacting said oocyte with nitric oxide (NO), an NO donor, nitric oxide synthase (NOS),  
or inducer of NOS; and,

maintaining said oocyte until the oocyte has undergone at least one cell division,  
wherein said activation is performed in the absence of sperm and wherein said  
maintaining step indicates that the oocyte is activated to reenter the mitotic cycle.

5. (amended) A method of inhibiting oocyte activation during fertilization *in vitro*, the  
method comprising:

contacting said oocyte with a nitric oxide synthase inhibitor ~~prior to or during fertilization;~~  
and

contacting said oocyte with sperm,  
wherein said oocyte is inhibited from activation during fertilization *in vitro* and reentry into  
the mitotic cycle.

15. (twice amended) ~~The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of~~ A method of  
activating an oocyte *in vitro*, the method comprising:

contacting said oocyte with nitric oxide (NO), an NO donor, nitric oxide synthase (NOS),  
or inducer of NOS; and,

contacting said oocyte with sperm; and prior to or during said activation.  
maintaining said oocyte until the oocyte has undergone at least one cell division,

wherein said maintaining step indicates that the oocyte is activated to reenter the mitotic  
cycle.